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The laziness of the Isneg man has become almost proverbial in Apayaw; he resents it of course, but what can be done about it? The Isneg are living in one of the richest provinces of the Philippines agriculturally, and nevertheless these last years, famine has desolated the land at every turn.

Once while at Alumani, I went to visit a few friends: three of them, the father and his two sturdy sons, the older one a widower, the younger one a bachelor, were living together in a house surrounded by the most fertile fields imaginable; and still they complained and said that they were starving to death, because there were no women to till the soil.

The year 1928 was a lean one almost all over the province, but Karagawan men preferred to squat down in their houses and feed on the flowers of the coconut tree rather than come to Kabugaw and earn a ganta (three liters) of rice a day by doing work that could easily be done by boys of twelve years of age: this work was too hard for them.

About the same time I had to go to Bayag, which is some forty miles distant from Kabugaw, a two days' walk. I sent my carriers one day ahead and gave them rations of rice for two days, in order to preclude any excuse for their not reaching their destination at least at the same time as myself. The next day I met the fellows about noon, sitting in a little hut some ten miles from home and cooking their last meal but one. Having rice they did not care for anything else. They had passed a day and a half walking ten miles, cooking rice, chewing betel nut, and . . . resting.

I could adduce a score of examples like this, all from personal experience. But after all why should we blame the Isneg for it? They were reared in years of plenty, when the smallest amount of work brought the largest possible returns; at the beginning of the lean years they consumed all the rice that had been hoarded up for years; and now the hard times have come: when a tree has been growing in a slanting direction for several years, can you make it lean to the other side in its old age? The Bontok Igorot is industrious and always ready to handle a job that may bring him some money; but he is living among rocks and cliffs, where even weeds and grasses refuse to thrive. The Isneg on the contrary are living in an exceedingly fertile country: up to recent times their district was closed to the outside world for lack of roads, and this prevented them from conducting active trade on any large scale and from selling the surplus

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461 of their products to the members of other tribes living in less favored
251 surroundings. Why should they have worked for things with which
433 they could do nothing? Add to this that their needs have always
487 been so very small that they would not have known what to do with
152 the money that would have been given them in exchange for their crops.

It may perhaps be hoped that the members of the younger generation will be less deserving of the reputation of laziness rightly affixed to the Isneg name, as they have never seen the fat years of their fathers, and so will more or less become inured to hard work. But when the years of plenty are again at the door, will they resist the temptation of resting from their exertions? Civilization is bringing them new needs, and roads are being opened to allow them to get rid advantageously of their superfluous crops: so there may be change.

461 On one of my first visits to Nagbabalayan, I was sitting one evening
152 with a large group of Isneg, old and young, on the porch of the teacher's house. It was dark, and the Isneg were asking questions about sun and moon, about light and darkness, etc. So it happened in the course of the conversation that I referred to the protracted darkness of the regions around the poles, where the sun would not rise for months at a time. On hearing this, a young Isneg man, quite exultant at the prospect, exclaimed with enthusiasm: "What a fine thing! Not to have to work for months! I wish we were living in a place like that". That's the Isneg; how he would curse old Adam, if he could but read the first chapters of Genesis.

152 The Isneg are also very easily dejected in time of sickness, and at the approach of any kind of hardship. The Karagawan case just mentioned would perhaps better have been placed here: it was really a case of utter dejection on account of the terrible famine that desolated their settlement, a thing they had never yet experienced in their whole life.

A few months ago I went down the Apayaw, and at a certain moment one of my rowers inadvertently cut himself with a headax that was lying on the bottom of the canoe: the wound was not at all serious, but the man lost a good amount of blood. For more than an hour he remained sitting in the boat without moving his oar, his face the picture of utter woe and desolation: you might have thought he was in a dying condition. He arose from his stupor and was his old self again only a long time after the blood had stopped flowing. Avoidance of hardship, not endurance, is a part of the Isneg system; hence their poor resistance to the blows of an adverse fortune.

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After the death of one of their relatives, the Isneg also *lapatán* or taboo some of the coconut trees that belonged to the deceased. Such trees are easily recognizable, as one always finds a certain quantity of strips of bamboo or of thorny branches or of both, tied all around the tree, at the height of one's shoulders. I know of a couple of Iloko teachers who, knowing nothing about this custom, climbed a tabooed coconut tree, in order to drop down some of the fruits and eat them; unfortunately they were caught by the owners and got free only after the payment of a heavy fine. If they had been natives of the district, they would not have escaped so easily, although I doubt very much if an Isneg would ever dare break such a taboo.

Coconuts that have been gathered at the time of the owner's death are also declared taboo, and nobody is allowed to partake of them until the time of the *obóbāt;* if no such ceremony takes place (which must be a rare contingency) the fruits are left to decay. At the time of the *obóbāt*, however, they are declared *inúkas* or free, and everybody is allowed to consume them.

The following are the *lapāt* or taboos that have to do with fishing:

1. It is usually forbidden to catch fish in that part of the river or brook that passes near the settlement in which a person died. This taboo is lifted only at the time of the *obóbāt*. The tabooed section, which is said to be *mabalsiyán*, is marked off at both ends by green leafy canes of bamboo grass (Miscanthus sinensis) stuck in the bottom of the river or brook.

2. If the relatives of the deceased claim the exclusive right of fishing in a certain part of a river or brook, this section or *anáwań* remains tabooed until the *obóbāt* or completion of the mourning period.

It is forbidden to work on two days, namely on the second day after the funeral, the *taribukáy*, and on the day following the *obóbāt* ceremony. This obligatory rest is called *úlin*, and any work done on such a day is considered useless and inevitably subject to being completely spoiled.

A widow or widower is forbidden to visit the relatives of the deceased husband or wife for the whole period that elapses between burial and *obóbāt*. Infringement of this taboo would cause the whole body of the culprit to swell up. The same punishment would be inflicted on a widow or widower who would dare eat mushrooms (*óoń*) or *úbud* (young shoots of some palm trees, as the *aníboń* or fishtail palm, etc.).

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of the soil that are cultivated among the Isneg. This little treatise on Isneg agriculture might have been written by a native, as I try to put myself as much as possible in the place of the Isneg.

I. Isneg Farming in General

It is freely stated all over Apayaw that, in former times, rice was always abundant in each and every village. Not to have old rice (*kópag*) in store, meaning "rice that had been reaped one or more years previously",[1] was the exception rather than the rule; and there were always in existence a goodly number of granaries where rice was kept that had been harvested up to four years back.

A famine (*dasmág* or *ulát*), under the circumstances, might be called an unknown entity, were it not that *dasmág* and *ulát* are genuine Isneg terms, and so that the thing they refer to must have made its appearance at least occasionally. Actually, however, every few years one hears about a famine devastating the land and bringing in its wake a tremendous amount of distress and misery. The children, of course, are usually the most to be pitied, as they are liable to be permanently affected by the lack of sufficient nourishment.

It might be objected that Apayaw is a rich agricultural country, that it is covered with vegetation throughout the year, that rice is not the only crop that can be raised with advantage, that there is an abundance of tropical forests containing plenty of trees and plants of which one or more parts are edible, and consequently that starvation must be impossible. To this I must answer that the cause is not to be found in the soil or in the climatic conditions of the country, but in the character of its inhabitants. The Isneg is easily dejected, he cannot stand adversity; if his ordinary means of sustenance fail, he is at a loss what to do, he just sits down and moons. Even when remunerative work is offered to him, an Isneg who has not the usual amount of rice at his disposal has rarely the courage to perform it: he is simply down.

Fortunately the average Isneg woman shows herself much more courageous, and, where her husband proves a dismal failure, she it

[1] Rice that has been kept for one or two years, because its owners, being in mourning for a dead child, abstained from eating it, is called *dinínāg*. In native words occurring in the present paper the accent (') is placed over the accented vowel. Accented n (ń) denotes the ng sound in English "bring". For full phonetic key, see M. Vanoverbergh. The Isneg, Publ. Cath. Anthrop. Conf., 1932, v. 3, no. 1, pp. 3-4.

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The *koxamán* or *ko-koxamán*: Skin thick, yellow; very large; eaten only when roasted. 245

The *lippokán*: Skin thin, greenish; very small, oval.

The *liwliwág* or *uliwag*: Skin thin, red; small, elongated, a little curved; meat reddish; stalk short, purple.

The *paiyáń*: Skin thick; very large, elongated; not much esteemed.

The *papuyán*: Skin thick, yellow; meat yellow, more or less sour.

The *paranán*: Skin thick, yellow; rather large; bunches very large; stalk very tall; leaves very large; not much esteemed.

The *sára*: Skin thin, purple; fruits considerably curved inwards; stalk purple.

The *tarakíta-*: Skin thick, yellow; small; eaten only when cooked.

The *tokkiyán*: Skin thin, yellow; small; not much esteemed.

The *toón*: Skin thin, yellow; resembling the *baráńan*, but larger; stalk very short.

To plant bananas, the Isneg remove (*magsí*) the suckers (*así*) that grow at the base of older plants, and merely transplant them at a distance of about ten feet from one another. The dry season should be chosen for this kind of work, because bananas transplanted at that time bear thick, fleshy fruits (*bilaltúg*), while banana suckers transplanted in the rainy season usually bear only small, thin fruits (*xararpít*).

After one year a transplanted banana bears its fruit and has a few young suckers growing at its base. The top (*púso*, "heart", or *púso báxat*) of the bunch or cluster of flowers never opens. The natives cut [262] it off (*maxipúso*) and use the young flower buds for vegetables.

The bunch of fruits (*búlig*) [75] is cut (*mańbág, tabgán*) before the 251 bananas are ripe enough to be eaten (when they are still *dupát*); therefore it has to be hung in the house (*mańlúto*) until the fruits are completely ripe (*nalúto*). Sometimes the hands (*sápad*; one hand: *tańasápad*) are separated (*magsápad*) from the bunch or *búlig* in order to lessen the difficulty of handling them.

To soften them more quickly the Isneg occasionally thrust single 252 bananas (*dupát*) under the fire or in the ashes of the hearth. Bananas and sweet potatoes that have undergone this treatment are both called *linoóm*.

Fruits (bananas, papayas, etc.) that are nearly ripe, are called [245] *sidaxán;* when they are completely ripe, they are said to be *nalúto*.

[75] One bunch: *tańabúlig; nibbubúlig*: bearing many fruits.

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251 Young banana leaves (*adón*) are used very extensively for wrapping
245 purposes, especially when things have to be kept fresh, for instance cooked rice, several kinds of viands, etc.

The men cut down (*lappadán, maglappád*) the leaves with the *alíwá* (hatchet) and gather (*manaxidón*) them.

Dry banana leaves (*arupát*) are used for wrapping all kinds of small objects.

245 A banana plantation where the leaves are all withered, is supposed
776 to be the abode of the spirit *Alčxān*. For the rest, no harm is done, as she never attempts to destroy the fruits.

6. YAMS

244 The origin of yams or *úbi* (Dioscorea alata, L., D. pentaphylla, L.,
773 etc.) is authenticated among the Isneg by the following stories:
539 *Uwil* from Bolo (O dialect, Main branch) told me this:
824

Ya nonōnná ńa úbi

The first yam

Kitó inumbét dató dódon kiddí itó nōnná ńa alxáw āwánda kanó ńa anán dató tólāy ta amminán dató dódon./ Kané āwánda ńa anán kitó mammínda ńa natáy ináru-da ya anánā-da séda ńa anún ăy imúlada to tabbit natú ababbíń./ Ay to ya nágbalín ka úbi to ya nonōnná ńa úbi.

When the locusts came here in former days, the people, it is said, had nothing to eat, as the locusts consumed everything./ And when they had nothing to eat, so they would all be dead, they took out a part of their children's bodies, and they ate it, and they planted the flesh of the child./ And that became a yam: that is the first yam.

Another man related to me a similar story with reference to the *paddíg*-yam: it is very large, and its skin is very red; it looks as if it were bleeding. On a certain day, a mother took her babe as soon as it was born and cut it into pieces, which she buried in the ground. After a while they grew, and when the woman dug them up, they had become *paddíg*-yams. She cooked them, ate them, and found them to be a savory kind of food.

A different story is woven around the *dinampáyán*, a kind of *lo-tó* (Dioscorea fasciculata, Roxb. and D. aculeata, L.). The *lo-tó* are small yams, whose meat is yellowish or white and very soft; their skin is thin and whitish or brown, and is easily peeled off when cooked; their vines and leaves are thorny. Formerly all *lo-tó* were soft

The vegetables may be: tomatoes, egg- 262
plants, squash, peppers, corn, beans, camote, gabi, or [244
yams. Fruits may be: bananas, coconuts, pineapples, 245]
jack fruit, oranges, lemons, guavas, melons, *lucban*,
mangoes, or papaya. The beverages may be: coffee, [272]
cocoa, or water. Honey is included in the diet. From [263]
sugar cane are produced candied fruits and vegetables,
molasses, *basi*, and vinegar. A strong tobacco is raised 276
and smoked—sometimes in a small pipe; but generally
one leaf is rolled into a small cigar. Both men and
women smoke. Boys and girls start smoking at an
early age.

In growing these things, the people do not use ir- 311
rigation; but follow the *kaiñgin* method of farming. 241
A suitable piece of wild land is selected. The vegetation [312]
is cut down, allowed to dry, and then burnt. Seeds
are planted in the ashen earth by making a hole with
a sharp stick and dropping a seed in it The plot is [317]
is enclosed with a bamboo fence. The men clear and [462]
fence the land, while the women do much of the rest
of the work. In two years the soil has become leached
and packed by the heavy tropical rains and so sterile
that a new *kaiñgin* is made elsewhere.

The rice is an upland variety which does not re- 243
quire much water. The seeds are planted during the
beginning of the rainy season in April and May. When
ripe, the heads are cut off by hand, using a miniature
aliwa. These heads are gathered into bundles, tied, and [25]
then stored in a specially built square granary whose 343]
architectural design follows that of the house. Tobacco 249
and vegetables are usually planted during January af- 244
ter the harvest, in the *kaiñgins* where rice was grown.

When the woman wishes some rice to cook, she 252
threshes several bundles on a mat or skin with a club; 412